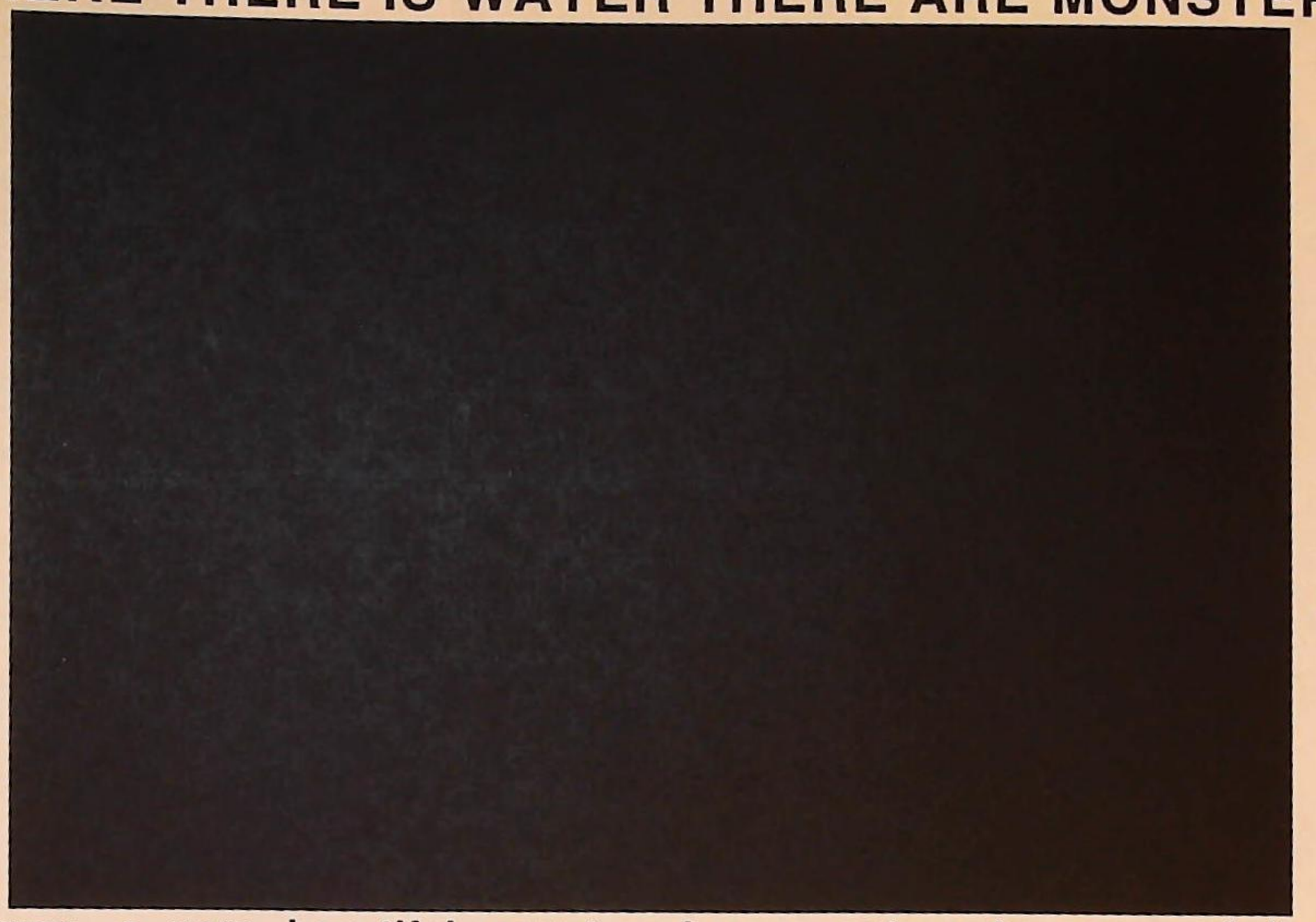
Norway:
WHERE THERE IS WATER THERE ARE MONSTERS



Norway, a very beautiful country, has monsters in many of its lakes

In the Hamar Chronicle (1617-1624) there is a chapter about "some miracles taking place in Hamar before bishop Mogens was captured". Mogens was the last roman-catholic bishop in Norway. Of the many oddities described in the chronicle there are several tesimonys about the sea serpent in Lake Mjosa.

The first description can be found in Jacob Zieglers book "Schondia" from the year 1532, where it is said that its body is multi-coloured. had a horse-like head, a long black mane and very large eyes.

One day the sea serpent is said to have beached by a rock close to Hamar. "A brave youth used his bow and shot a number of arrows thro one of its eyes, killing the monster". When the sea serpent died, a gre liquid poured out of its wounds and stained the surrounding water. A storm followed and the night after the sea serpent had been washed ashore. There it remained "and poisoned the air with a terrible stenc

The bishop of Hamar demanded that the sea serpent should be destroy

and the locals burned it. The skeleton remained on the beach for many years to come, until som German merchants was allowed to remove some of the bones. It is said that the smallest part of the spine was large and heavy, that one grown man hardly could carry it. This information seems to confirm that these unknown animals are vertebrates and a kind of reptiles.

That the sea serpent in Lake Mjosa was killed in a rain of arrows was bad. But it didn´t affect the Norwegian stock that much. About 200 years later, in the 1700´s, similar reports came from a lar number of lakes.

In Lake Lundevattnet at Rogaland a swimming sea serpent with 8-9 humps moved faster then a man could row. In Lake Repstadsvattnet at Sogn and Fjordane, the sea serpent had a mane on its neck similar to that of a horse. Similar descriptions came from Lake Deblemyren at Vest-Agder, Lake Krovattnet at Ryfylke, Lake Ringsjon at Oppland, Lal Sorossjon at Hedmark - the list could go on and on for many pages. So there was no shortage of sea serpents.

MONSTER OF THE THIRD LAKE

Lake Sandnesvatnet, with Krakmotinden mountain in the background, is spooky place.

One summers night in 1910 the surface was smooth as a mirror on Lal Sandnesvatnet in Nordland, a narrow mountain lake on Hamaroy Island between Narvik and Bodo, along the Vestfiorden in the north of Norwa

Mosquitos swarmed over the water. On and off one could see a large salmon trout jumping into the air, trying to catch an insect, before falling down into the water. On both sides of the lake the wood was dark and secretive.

A boat glided forward with even oar-strokes. A slight creak was hear from its oarlocks and the boat made a wake in the dark water. Mrs Oli Sandnes was at the oars, on her way to deliver food to the man who c timber in the wood. In the stern of the boat sat her youngest son. Olir knew to lake and there was neither shallow water nor rocks where th boat was right now.

"But suddenly the boat collided with something in the water, my chil fell to the floor and I almost fell myself. What on earth was this, it through my head", she said later.

Oline first thought she had bumped into a log, but then she felt that object was "soft and wet like a sandbank". She leaned over the rail of the boat and looked into the water to see what it was - and had the shock of her life! "A large, dark animal was just at the surface. It w 5-6 meters long and as wide as the boat. It quickly sank back into the depth again and was gone".

This incident wasn´t known until the Norwegian weekly magazi Allers made an article about the monster in January 1976. But "Vasstrollet" (Norwegian for lake monster), as it is called locally, h been seen every summer since Oline Sandnes meet it in 1910, accordin to the locals.

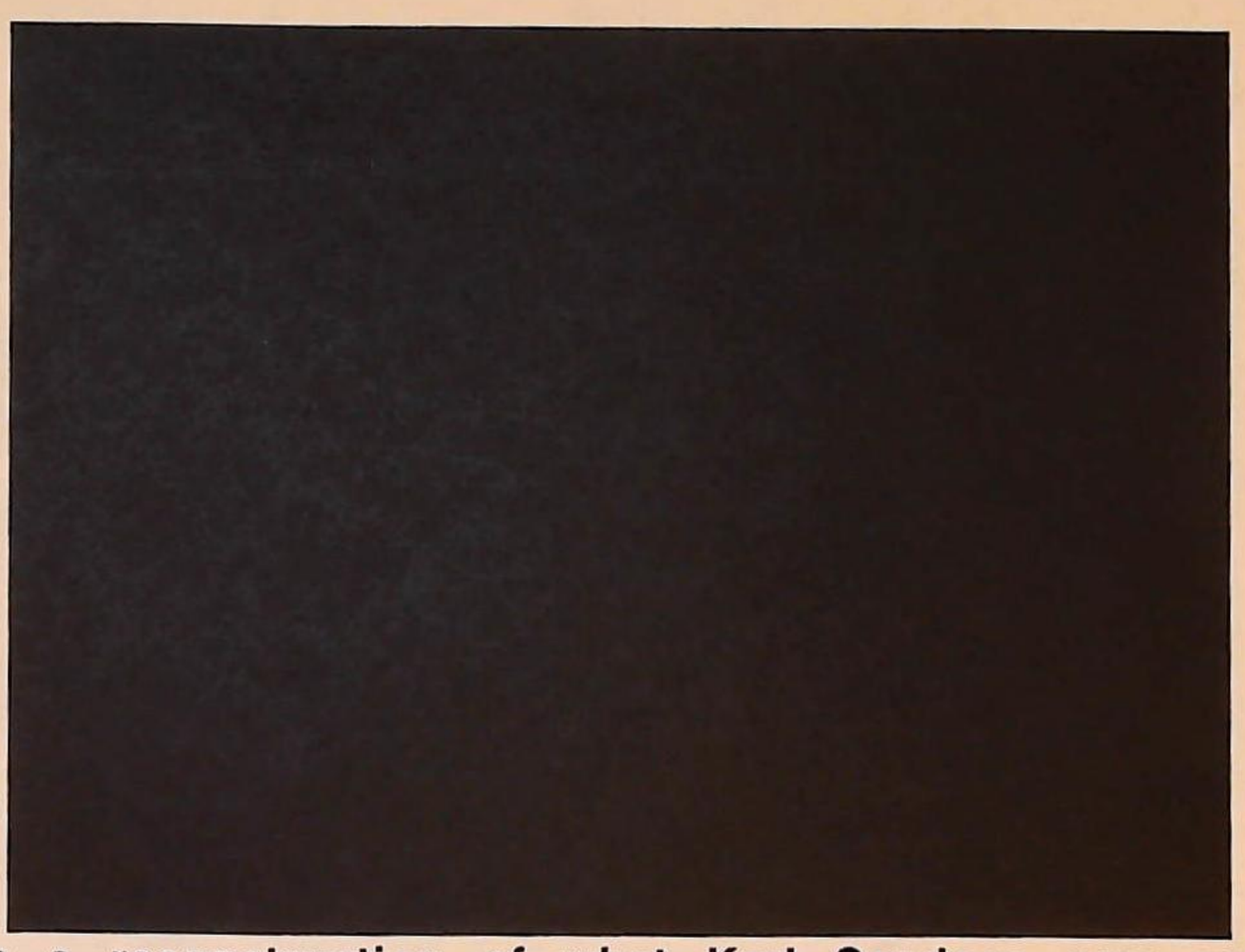
Journalist Knut Hoff on the newspaper Nordlandsposten at Bodo, who participated in an expedition to the lake in the Autumn of 1972, arranged by still another weekly magazine, told me over the phone:

"The summer of 1969 was very warm up here in the north. I was worki late when a man called from Hamaroy and was very excited. He had see Vasstrollet he said, and not only that, he had rowed right onto it!".

The man was from Oslo and on vacation at his grandfather. He was ver serious and wanted that the newspaoer should send a photographer. He would watch the lake himself for three days, the time that was left his vacation. "He didn´t dare to use a boat, at least not alone. H stayed at the beach for three days, his camera ready but Vasstrollet wouldn´t show and he had to leave there emptihanded", Knut H concluded.

Karl Sandnes, 72, who has lived by Lake Sandnesvatnet all his life, sa Vasstrollet the year after, and related the following:

"A fine summers evening in 1970 I sat in my cabin, which is right by lake. It was still light outside and completely calm. Suddenly I saw something that surfaced by a small point on the other side of the lak It was an object that looked like an upside-down boat and it swam fo some 300 meters on the surface before it dived and vanished. Shortly thereafter it surfaced again. It swam rather quickly, faster then you could row a boat and it made great waves".



This is a reconstruction of what Karl Sandnes saw on the lake.

In the summer of 1982 I was at Lofoten together with the "coast walker" and adventurer Erik Reutersvard (who just walked himself in the Guinness Book of Records), and personally meet Karl Sandnes at Sandnesvatnet. He told us that Sandnesvatnet also is called the Third lake, as it is the third of seven lakes , stretching from the sea and inland.

The three km long and 130 meters deep Lake Sandnesvatnet could be seen from European road 6 (E6), which passes along its eastern side towards the village Krakmo. The nature surrounding the lake is secretive and fairy-like, especially because of the dark forests and t high, snowy mountains with Krakmotinden in the west, which looks a like a sharkfin.

In the autumn of 1972 the weekly magazine Vi Menn tried to solve the mystery with a search they called Expedtion Isak. The team members were people like Thor Heyerdahl Jr., marine biologist at Bodo and son the famous explorer, the chief of police Torbjorn Hoydahl, judge Ragr Fagereng, a reporter from NRK, the Norwegian Broadcasting Corporati and the journalist Knut Hoff, together with the magazines own journalist and a photographer. But the mysterious monster of the lak kept away, despite vigilant watches and lookouts around the clock.

On one of the many greyish-white beaches they found mysterious trac Round, uneven drag-marks, like they had come out of the water and vanished back into it. Marine biologist Thor Heyerdahl Jr. stated: "Wh ever it was had cloven hoofs on both the backlegs and the hindlegs". H refused to comment if he though that Vasstrollet had left the tracks.

Vi Menn found that not only Lake Sandnesvatnet has a sea serpent on t island in question. In a rich wilderness about 10 km west of there lie Lake Rombovatnet, at 450 meters above sea level. This is an area wher laplenders use to walk with their reindeers. But one year the reindeer refused to settle in the area. There was a strange stench coming from the beach and by a large sandbank was the cadaver of a large, unknown animal.

No one knows what happend to it.

In the autumn of 1975 the postman Harald Utheim was standing by the few houses at Sandnes, talking to his neighbour Petter Vassmo. The weather was fine with sun and no wind. Lake Sandnesvatnet was smoc like a mirror.

"Suddenly we saw large waves on the lake", said Harald. They came an went as mysteriously. The phenomenon was repeated three times in a row, then everything was quiet again. "Even if we couldn´t see anything, it had to be something large in the water to cause such waves".

It was not the first time Harald Utheim had seen strange things on th surface of the lake. "A couple of years ago we were ten people here at Sandnes who saw something coming towards us with high speed", he went on. The classical upside-down boat turned towards the farm at Kirkefjell mountain on the other side of the lake. "The animal had as high speed as a motorboat, and the wake after it was at least one kilometer on the lake. Neither bird nor fish could have caused somet like that".

Vasstrollet continues to puzzle the people at Nordland. Lake Sandnesvatnet is just as known for sea serpents in the north as Lake Seljordsvatnet is in the south.

In Lake Rommen at the village Romskog in Ostfold, in the south, an unknown animal surfaced in the summer of 1975, but there´s a lot to say it has been seen there since the 30´s. There is also a note about it from the 1700´s when it should have had "a head like a calf and a body resambling a log".

It was Monday, September 30, 1975, when Asbjorg Holmedal came in h large bus from Lillestrom on his way to Grensen. In the bus was his wife and 15 schoolchildren from the ages of 8-13 years. He was closi in on the crossroads at Romskogs church, on the west side of the lak when he noticed that large waves crashed against the shore. Asbjorg stopped the bus and asked the kids to look out for a swimming moose he thought had caused them. When no moose showed up he went on.

"Suddenly one of the kids shouted that there was a large animal in th water. When I stopped again I saw an animal that was between 7 and 1 meters long", he told us the year after it happend. "The animal had tw parts of its body over the surface and they must have been 30-40 cm high".

The distance between these parts, as he described as a couple of hum was 1-2 meter, and their length was just over one meter. The animal was greyish-black in colour and its skin resambled a wet fur. Some 15-20 seconds later it sank straight down in one fast movement and was gone.

Professor Hjalmar Munthe-Kass Lund at Oslo University, was asked by local paper about what it could have been that Asbjorg Holmedal, his wife and the 15 schoolkids had seen, and answered dead certain:

"Marsh gas! In the summer, and especially after heatwaves, marsh gas rising from the bottom in large floes. It can often lift an old log fro the bottom. The gas enters the log, and throws it away like it had jet-power, which makes it come to the surface at high speed creating large waves. It couldn´t have been anything else".

Asbjorg Holmedal frowned when he heard that explanation. What he sa was as far from a log as you could possibly come. All witnesses agre that what they had seen in the water was a living creature.

Villager Kjell Roger Nilsson from Romskog came to their defense and said that he and his wife had seen something mysterious in the lake years eaerlier. "It was a summers day in 1974. My wife and I was swimming close by the place, where Holmedal and the others saw the mysterious object. We heard a couple of large splashing sound on a distance of 50-60 meters and then saw something large moving in circles in the water. We quickly left the lake and told no one, as we thought that we would be ridiculed", said Kjell Roger.

After the interview by the lake I and my good friend Peter Casperssor were invited to the home of Asbjorg Holmedal and his wife. What we there was told is said to have taken place in the 30´s.

"A neighbour told me he had taken a shortcut through the forest one night, when he encountered a large unknown animal", said Asbjorg Holmedal. "The animal was like a black crawling mass and reminded h of a giant slug. It came from a smaller water on the mountain and we out into Lake Rommen".

How did it move?

"It moved up and down, vertically, and pulled itself forward like it h a pair of feet or fins", Asbjorg continued. "It passed my neighbour on distance of just ten meters, but he was to shocked to remember any details and ran from the place before it went down into the lake".

A giant slug? Three to four meters long, according to the neighbour, who unfortunately no longer was among us. Was something like that really possible? Well, everything seems to be possible when ut comes to lake monsters and sea serpents, and Asbjorg Holmedal neighbour is not alone to describe these animals as giant slug.

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